

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 01621 202043Z

73

ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00 AID-05

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /087 W  
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O 201901Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2762

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 663

USUN NY 1542

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1621

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, CVIS

SUBJECT: ASSYRIANS AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES

ROME FOR INS FLACHER

REF: (A) GENEVA 1077, (B) BEIRUT 1395

(C) DAVIS-LAWRENCE TELECON, FEB 19

(D) BRENNAN-CARLIN TELECON,  
FEB 19.

1. MEETING SCHEDULED REF (A) WAS HELD HERE FEB 19 WITH  
FOLLOWING PARTICIPANTS: UNHCR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ASSISTANCE  
HOMAN HERIMBERG, DELEGATE FOR GREECE HASSELMAN, AND BEIRUT  
REP, JAHN; WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES REP BEIRUT DE JONGE;  
INS EUROPEAN DIRECTOR FALCHER AND ATHENS CHIEF PAPPAS;  
ATHENS CONGEN DAVIS AND REFUGEE OFFICER SIAFACAS; US MISSION  
GENEVA HA COUNSELOR BRENNAN.

2. MEETING BEGAN WITH REVIEW OF SECURITY CONDITIONS

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 01621 202043Z

IN BEIRUT BASED UPON ON-THE-SCENE OBSERVATIONS OF DE JONGE

AND JAHN. CONSENSUS WAS THAT, ALTHOUGH CEASE-FIRE CURRENTLY HOLDING, GENERAL CONDITIONS IN AND AROUND BEIRUT, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE LESS WELL PROTECTED, SUCH AS REFUGEES, REMAIN HAZARDOUS. CONCLUSION THEREFORE REACHED THAT SUBJECT REFUGEE POPULATION SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM BEIRUT AREA AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, WITH RETURN OF SOME NEEDED MEDICAL PERSONNEL TO BEIRUT, AND SOME CONSULAR CAPABILITY NOW AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY, IT APPEARED DESIRABLE TO PROCESS THERE AT LEAST THAT INITIAL GROUP OF REFUGEES WHOSE RECORDS ARE CURRENTLY IN ORDER. DECISION TAKEN ACCORDINGLY THAT DE JONGE, WHO RETURNED TO BEIRUT IMMEDIATELY AFTER MEETING, WOULD FINALIZE DOSSIERS HE NOW HAS IN HAND AND NOTIFY INS WHEN CASES READY FOR PROCESSING IN BEIRUT. FALCHER AND PAPPAS STATED INS PERSONNEL PREPARED PROCEED BEIRUT IMMEDIATELY INDICATION RECEIVED THAT ALL IN READINESS FOR FIRST GROUP. DE JONGE FELT THAT HE WOULD HAVE CASES READY FOR 200 HEADS OF FAMILIES (800 TO 1000 PEOPLE) BY NEXT MID-WEEK. INS ESTIMATED IT COULD COMPLETE ITS WORK ON THIS INITIAL GROUP IN 40 TO 50 WORKDAYS, ASSUMING A FLOW OF 50 TO 60 "BREADWINNERS" PER DAY. DE JONGE WAS ALSO ASKED TO BRIEF EMBASSY BEIRUT ON MEETING AND ENSURE THAT CONSULAR SECTION PREPARED TO HANDLE INITIAL REFUGEE APPLICANTS.

3. CONCURRENTLY, UNHCR DELEGATE ATHENS WILL APPROACH GREEK GOVT TO REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR REMAINDER OF REFUGEE GROUP, ESTIMATED MAX 1700, TO BE PROCESSED IN TRANSIT STATUS THROUGH ATHENS. ACCORDINGLY, HASSELMAN HAS APPOINTMENT TO MEET WITH DEPUTY FORMIN STAVROPULOS AT NOON, FEB 21. POINT STRESSED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT LEBANESE GOVT HAD, AS INDICATED REF (B), EXPRESSED SUPPORT AND EVEN DESIRE THAT REFUGEES DEPART LEBANON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN LATER MEETING, UNHCR AIDE ATHENS, AN EXPERIENCED AND KNOWLEDGABLE GREEK NATIONAL, GAVE HIS OPINION THAT GOG WOULD POSE NO OBSTACLE TO REFUGEES TRANSITING GREECE, PROVIDED USUAL ASSURANCES GIVEN RE EVENTUAL DEPARTURE AND NO COST TO GOG.

4. WITH REGARD TO CONSULAR PROCESSING IN ATHENS, CONGEN DAVIS FORESAW NO SPECIAL PROBLEMS PROVIDED IT COULD BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO ONSET OF SUMMER TOURIST SEASON. HE ESTIMATED THAT 50 TO 60 CASES COULD BE HANDLED PER DAY, 250 TO 300

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ATHENS 01621 202043Z

WORKWEEK, OR THAT, WITH OVERTIME 294, ALL 1700 REMAINING REFUGEES COULD BE PROCESSED IN FIVE WEEKS TIME, ASSUMING VISA NUMBERS RELEASED BY DEPT IN ADVANCE FOR THESE PEOPLE. SHOULD ARRIVAL OF REFUGEES IN GREECE BE STAGGERED, BECAUSE OF TRAVEL, DOCUMENTATION OR OTHER RESTRICTIONS EX-BEIRUT, ESTIMATED AVERAGE STAY OF REFUGEES ACCEPTED BY U.S. SHOULD NOT EXCEED TWO WEEKS. CG DAVIS STATED ADDITIONAL CONS OFF AND 2 CLERICAL PERSONNEL WOULD BE NEEDED TO ASSIST IN ADDED

WORKLOAD. AS CONCERNS NUMBERS AVAILABLE, MEETING WAS INFORMED THAT, CONTRARY TO EARLIER BELIEF, 200 INITIAL NUMBERS DID NOT RPT NOT HAVE TO BE USED BY END OF FEBRUARY. RATHER, INS HAD ADVISED THAT 561 TOTAL INS NUMBERS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH END OF CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, I.E., SEPT 30.

5. A QUESTION WAS POSED AS TO THE VISA AND VISA APPLICATION FEES, AMOUNTING TO \$25.00. ALTHOUGH VISA FEE, AS WELL AD MEDICAL FEE, MUST BE PAID, AND WILL PROBABLY BE INCLUDED IN ICEM TRAVEL LOAN, FOR WHICH EACH MIGRANT SIGNS PROMISSORY NOTE, IT WAS ASKED WHETHER \$5.00 VISA APPLICATION FEE MIGHT BE WAIVED IN THESE CASES. DEPT'S VIEW REQUESTED.

6. AS REGARDS ACCOMODATIONS IN ATHENS, LAVRIOS FACILITIES ARE NOW FULL AND ICEM VOCATIONAL SCHOOL CAN ACCOMMODATE ONLY ABLU 150 PEOPLE. ON OTHER HAND, DE JONGE FELT THAT ICEM OFFERED EXCELLENT LOCATION FOR PROCESSING LARGE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES. TO ADVISE ICEM OF GENERAL SITUATION AND REQUEST ITS ASSISTANCE IN MOVING REFUGEES TO AND THROUGH ATHENS, HASSELMAN AND BRENNAN MET WITH ICEM ATHENS CHIEF ALEXANDRAKI TODAY. SHE FELT THERE SHOULD BE NO GREAT DIFFICULTY, WITH MANH HOTELS IN ATHENS AREA VACANT, AND SAID ICEM WAS PREPARED ARRANGE FOR NECESSARY ACCOMODATIONS ON BRIEF NOTICE. WE FELT THAT UNIT COST FOR ROOM AND BOARD PER DAY WOULD BE ON ORDER OF \$7.00.

7. ESTIMATED TOTAL WORKLOAD IS 1500 ASSYRIANS FROM IRAQ, INCLUDING SOME 200 TO 300 CHALDEAN CATHOLICS, 400 ARMEN- IANS FROM IRAQ, 200 EGYPTIAN COPTS, AND 400 AMENIANS FROM EASTERN EUROPE. OF THESE, AN ESTIMATED 600 COULD TRAVEL OV VALID USSR PASSPORTS, 200 ON EGYPTION PASSPORTS, 200 ON IRAQI, AND 1500 WITHOUT CURRENT NATIONAL DOCUMENTA- TION, WHO WOULD REQUIRE ICRC LAISSEZ PAPPERS. QUESTION CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 ATHENS 01621 202043Z

WAS RAISED WHETHER ALL THOSE PROCEEDING THROUGH GREECE MIGHT NOT TRAVEL ON RED CROSS DOCUMENTS. UNHCR WILL LOOK INTO MATTER WITH ICRC GENEVA IMMEDIATELY AND REQUEST EXPEDI- TING ISSUANCE, SHOULD THIS PROVE NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE. ALTERNATIVELY, SHOULD GOG ACCEPT NOMINAL ROLLS FOR REFUGEES TO ENTER GREECE, WHICH QUESTION HASSELMAN WILL PUT TO STAV- ROPOULOS TOMORROW, ICRC OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION MIGHT NOT BE REQUIRED, SINCE ONWARD TRAVEL TO U.S. WOULD BE ON INS OR STATE-ISSUED DOCUMENTS. KUBISCH

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## Message Attributes

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